



# LORAIN COUNTY

## Board of Commissioners

Betty Blair Lori Kokoski Ted Kalo

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440-329-5760

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440-329-5530

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440-329-5102

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## SUNSHINE PERIOD

FILED/ACCEPTED

DEC -1 2008

Federal Communications Commission  
Office of the Secretary

October 23, 2008

Honorable Betty Sutton  
1665 West Market Street, #435  
Akron, Ohio 44313

Dear Congresswoman Sutton

We have great concern about news reports, we are hearing about the FCC's pending vote on reform measures that have the potential to increase local phone rates, radically affect telecommunications investment and cause job loss. Like the rest of the country, our state and citizens are experiencing what appear to be the long-term effects of the Nation's economic crisis.

We have now learned, that the FCC may issue an order on November 4<sup>th</sup> that will raise the rates of residential telephone customers and further destabilize the telecommunications industry and investment in our most rural, and highest cost markets. Local governments, both state and city, are making budget cuts in an attempt to balance our budgets. A rate increase for telecommunications and Internet services would hurt not only local and state government, but also our citizens.

We are concerned about the loss of jobs for our state. We are also hearing, that the local telephone company may have to lay people off and spend less money to improve service in our area if this FCC order is approved. During these tough economic times, with the housing markets in upheaval, further loss of jobs in our state would be disastrous.

The timing of this proposed order could not be worse. We understand that some reform may be needed, but highly risky reform of this magnitude at this time cannot bode well for consumers or businesses. Consumers do not need to see their utility bills increase, particularly citizens that live in small rural communities. Most of the citizens in these areas are on fixed incomes.

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Congresswoman Sutton  
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Worse still, you will effectively be creating a mess at the federal level and leave it up to state governments to explain it to our citizens. In addition to consumer rate increases, we do not need that kind of distraction and disruption at this time. We are concerned about an FCC order that could cause rates to increase for citizens and small businesses at a time when the economy is unstable at best. The FCC has not included consumer groups or even the state utility commissioners in this most recent decision-making process – that is just wrong.

Our request is that you ask the FCC not to vote for this intercarrier compensation order in its present form. A new administration will be taking office in January. We believe it is best to let such reforms be addressed as part of the new president's telecommunications agenda and not allow this order to become a last minute attempt at reform without allowing all parties to weigh in about the high-risk outcomes for consumers.

Sincerely,

LORAIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

*Betty Blair*  
Betty Blair, President

*Lori Kokoski*  
Lori Kokoski, Vice-President

*Ted Kalo*  
Ted Kalo, Member

Cc: ~~FCC Chairman Kevin Martin~~  
FCC Commissioners; Robert McDowell, Michael Copps  
and Jonathan Adelstein  
Timothy A. Kissane, VP and General Manager – CenturyTel's  
File

Betty Blair  
Ted Kalo  
Lori Kokoski

County Administrator  
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